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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, who has ordained the seasons of our lives, thank You for the steadfastness of Your mercy and long suffering.

Today, inspire our lawmakers to open themselves to the gift of Your presence, remembering that You are always with them. Where there is fear, give courage. Where there is anxiety, give peace. Where there is despair, give hope. Where there is sadness, give joy. May our Senators joyfully encounter You on a daily basis. Lord, inspire them to hear Your words and obey Your precepts.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, July 20, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, for decades, both parties have shared a desire to invest in our Nation's infrastructure. It is one of the few issues here in Washington where our two parties can consistently work together, and it has been years since Congress passed a significant stand-alone investment. We are hoping to change that this year.

Nearly a month ago—a month ago—a bipartisan group of Senators came together, along with the White House, and agreed on a framework for a bipartisan infrastructure bill. So last night I moved to set up a process for the Senate to consider that bipartisan framework.

On Wednesday, the Senate will take the first procedural vote on a shell bill, merely a vehicle to get the whole process started. It is not a final deadline for legislative text. It is not a cynical ploy. It is not a fish-or-cut-bait moment. It is not an attempt to jam anyone. It is only a signal that the Senate is ready to get the process started, something the Senate has routinely done on other bipartisan bills this year.

All a “yes” vote on the motion to proceed means is simply that the Senate is ready to begin debating a bipartisan infrastructure bill—no more, no

less. We have waited a month. It is time to move forward.

My colleagues have heard me speak for months about making progress on two different tracks of infrastructure. After the group of Senators reached a deal with the White House, I endorsed it and I announced I wanted to put their agreement on the floor of the Senate in July. This week's vote is an honest attempt to get something done, to get the ball rolling on the Senate floor.

That is why I am giving the maximum amount of flexibility to our Senate colleagues who are negotiating this bill. If the bipartisan group can finalize the text of their agreement by Thursday, I will offer it as the pending substitute amendment. If, for whatever reason, the bipartisan group isn't ready with their final text by Thursday, I will offer an amendment consisting only of the bipartisan infrastructure bills that have already gone through our Senate committees and are actually the core of the bipartisan infrastructure framework. They are the water bill, the highway bill, the rail and safety bill, and the energy bill.

All of them are bipartisan, all of them have gone through committee, and all of them received overwhelming Republican votes. Why wouldn't our Republican colleagues want to move to proceed to debate that bill, at the very minimum, even if we don't have agreement on the broader bipartisan bill?

Just to go over the record, the Environment and Public Works Committee reported the water bill, passed by voice vote, unanimous, in committee and then 89 to 2 on the Senate floor. The Environment and Public Works Committee reported the highway bill, passed by 20 to 0. The Commerce Committee reported the rail and safety bill, passed by 25 to 3. And the Energy and Natural Resources Committee report of the energy bill passed 13 to 7.

So once again, to repeat, this week's vote is an honest attempt to get something done, to get the ball rolling on

• This “buller” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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